

Amendments To the Claims:

Please amend the claims as shown.

1-8. (canceled)

9. (currently amended) A system of the type including multiple functions relating to production, including Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), maintenance and automation, configured to provide access to data from a plurality of data devices within the system, the data devices including an automation device, an ERP device, and an MES device, the system comprising:

a central access device having interface connections to receive data from each of the data devices, wherein the central access device comprises mechanisms for providing a uniform, central access to multiple ones of the plurality of data sources and uniform visualization of the data in the data received from the multiple ones of the data sources, the central access device including a restricted access administration device providing role-based access for each of multiple users so that each user is enabled to access data from predetermined devices without being able to access data of other devices, the central access device further including:

a polling device configurable by users in order to acquire data cyclically from the various data sources and to evaluate the data in such a way that upon attainment of a criterion configurable by users a corresponding message is automatically generated; and a visualization device having a plurality of portal modules enabling data fetched from different devices to be viewed simultaneously in a visualization window.

10-16. (canceled)

17. (previously presented) The system as claimed in claim 9, wherein the central access device includes a data acquisition device for assembling data from the plurality of data devices in accord with the role-based access of each user.

18-22. (canceled)

23. (previously presented) The system as claimed in claim 17, wherein the data acquisition device accesses the various data devices in a manner controlled by the restricted access administration device, acquires data therefrom and provides this data for display in the visualization window.

24. (previously presented) The system as claimed in claim 17, wherein the data acquisition device accesses the various data sources in a manner controlled by the access administration device and acquires data from the data sources, wherein the data acquisition device makes the data available to the visualization device.

25. (canceled)

26. (canceled)